

W. Herbert 1774
Here beghneth the chorle & the byrde



Problemes of olde lykenes and fygyres
Whiche prouyd be fructuous of sentence
And auctoritates grounded on scryptures
By resembلائce of notable apparence
With moraltytes concludynge on prudence
Lyke as the byble reherceth by wytyng
How trees chele hem somtyme a kyng

2. **F**yrst in theyr chole they named cholyue
To regne amonge them Judiciū doth expre
But he hym selfe gaye culen tlyue
He myght not forsake his facrenesse
As the fyge tree his amerouse swetenesse
As the vygne his hollome sarage
Whiche gyueth comfort to all maner age

3. **A**nd semblably poetes laureate
By derke parables full conuenient
Sayne that byrdes and bestes of astate
As ryall egles and lyons by assent
Sente out wytytes to holde a parlement
And made decrees bypely for to sepe
Some to haue lordshyp & some to obeie

4. **E**gles to chayre hyghest to make the flyght
Power of lyons on the ground is sene
Redre amonge trees hyghest is of syght
And the laurere of nature is aye grene
Of floures all flora ny goddesse & quene

Thus of all thynges ther beu dyuerlyters
Some of astate and some of lowe degrees

Poetes wryte wonderfull lykenes
And vnder couerte kepe hem self close
They take bestes and foules to wytnes
Of whos faynyng fables fyrste arole
And here I calie to my poin pole
Out of frenshe a tale to translate
Whiche is a paunflete I rede & lawe late

This tale whiche I make of mencion
Is groos reheryd playnly to declare
Thre prouertes payed for a raunson
Of a byrde whiche was take in a snare
Wonder despyroule to scape fro her care
Of myn auctours folowynge the processe
So as it befell in ordre I shall expresse

Whylom ther was in a small byllage
As myn auctour maketh reher sayll
A chorle whiche had luste & grette courage
Within hym self by dyligent cranayll
To make a gardyn of ryche entayll
Of lengthe & briede lyche square and longe
Hegged and dyched to make it sure & stronge

All the aleys were made playne with sonde
The benches couerde with newe turues grene

¶ Sweete herbes with conduytes at the bonde
¶ That wythit vp agayne the sonne shene
¶ Lyke syluer streames as ony rypfall dene
¶ The burbll waxes in theyr vp boyllynge
¶ Rounde as berell theyr beemes out shewynge

9. ¶ Hydde in the gardyn stode a fresshe laurpre
¶ Theron an byrde syngynge daye and nyght
¶ With shynynge fethers bryghter than golde wyte
¶ Whiche with her longe made heuy hertes lyght
¶ That to beholde hit was an heuently syght
¶ How towarde euey and in the darwenyght
¶ She dyde her payne moost amercully to synge

Amercully

10. ¶ Elperus enforced strongly her courage
¶ Towarde euey whan phrebus gay to weste
¶ Amonge the braunches to her auantage
¶ To synge her complyne & than go to reste
¶ And at rylsynge of quene alceste
¶ To synge agayne as it was her de we
¶ Erly on morowe the daye sterte to saluete

saluete

11. ¶ He was a very heuently melodye
¶ Euey and more to here the byrdes longe
¶ And the swete sugred armonye
¶ Of vncaute werblis & tenones drawe a longe
¶ That all the gardyn of the noyse ronge
¶ Tyll on a morowe whan Tptan shone clere
¶ This birde was trapped & caught with a pantere

12. The choile was glad whan he this byrde had take
Mery of chere of loke and of vsage
And in all haste he purposed to make
Within his house a pienty lytyll cage
And with her longe to reioyle his courage
Till at the laste the sely byrde abyeyde
And sobriely thus to the choile she sayde

13. I am now take and stande vnder dangere
Holdey strenght that I may not flee
A deu my longe and all my notes clere
Now that I haue loste my lybertee
Now I am thrall where somtyme he was free
And truste well whyle I am in dystresse
I can not synge nor make no gladnesse

And though my cage forged where of golde
And the pynacles of berell and crystall
I remembre a prouerbe sayd of olde
Who loseth his fredom forsooth he loseth all
For I haue leuer vpon a braunche small
Merely to synge amonge the woodes grene
Than in a cage of syluer bryght and shene

15. Songe in pylon hath none accordannce
Trowest thou I wyll synge in pylon
Songe procedeth of Joye and of pleasaunce
And pylon canseth deeth and destruccyon
Ryngynge of fetters is no mery lowne

¶ Or how sholde he be glad or Joconde
¶ Agayne his wyll that lyeth in cheynes bonde

16. ¶ What auaylleth it a lyon to be a kynge
¶ Of beestes all thete in a toure of stone
¶ Or an egle vnder strete keepynge
¶ Called also kynge of foules euerychone
¶ For on lordshyp what lyberte is gone
¶ Answer herto late it not afterte
¶ Who syngeth merly that syngeth not at herte

¶ And yf thou wylt reioyse of my synngynge
¶ Late me god flee far from all daungere
¶ And euery daye in the morenyng
¶ I shall repayre vnto thy laurell
¶ And freshely synge with lusty notes clere
¶ Vnder thy chambre or a fore thy hall
¶ Euery sealon what thou lyst me calle

18. ¶ To be sheete vp and pruned vnder drede
¶ No thyng acordeth vnto my nature
¶ Though I were fed with mylke & wastell brede
¶ And with cruddes brought to my pasture
¶ Yet had I leuer to do my besy cure
¶ Erly on morowe to scape wthe vale
¶ To fynde my dynet amonge the wormes smale

19. ¶ The laborer is gladder at the plough
¶ Erly on morowe to fedde hym on bacch

¶ Than some may is that hath good ynough
¶ And all deuytees plente and forlon
¶ And hath no freedom with his possellyon
¶ To goo at large but as a bere at a stake
¶ To passe his boundes but yf he leue take

¶ Take this answere for a full conclusyon
¶ To synge in pryson yf shalt not nie constrayne
¶ Tyll I haue freedom in woodes vp and down
¶ To flee at large on bowhes rowhe & playne
¶ And of reason thou sholdest not dyloayne
¶ Of my desyre but laughe & haue game
¶ But who is a chorle wolde eche may were y same

¶ Well quod the chorle syth it wyll not be
¶ That I desyre as by thy talkynge
¶ Nagre thy wyll thou shalt chele of thre
¶ Wythyn a cage meryly to synge
¶ So to the kethyne I shall thy bodeye brynge
¶ Pulle thy fethers that be bryght and clere
¶ And after rolle or bake the to my loupere

¶ Than sayd the byrde to reason saye I not naye
¶ Touchynge my longe a full answere thou halte
¶ And whan my fethers plucked ben awaye
¶ And my bodeye rosted or bakyn in paste
¶ Thou shalt of me haue a smale repaste
¶ But and thou wyle werke by my counsayll
¶ Thou mayst by me haue a grette anayll

23.

¶ If thou wylt to my reason assente
 ¶ And suffre me goo frely from pylon
 ¶ Without raunson or any other rente
 ¶ I shall the ryue a notable gwerdon
 ¶ Thre grete wylde doins accordynge to reason
 ¶ More of value take hede what I profre
 ¶ Than all the golde that shette is in thy cofre

24.

¶ Truste me well I shall the not dysceyue
 ¶ Well sayd the choile telle anone late see
 ¶ Nay sayd the byrde thou muste afore conceyue
 ¶ Who shall teche of reason muste goo free
 ¶ He spreketh a mayster to haue his lybertee
 ¶ And at large to teche his lessoun
 ¶ Haue me not suspecte I mene no treason

25.

¶ Well sayd the choile I holde me contente
 ¶ I truste thy promple that thou hast made to me
 ¶ The byrde flew forth the choile was of assente
 ¶ And toke her flyght vpon the laurer tree
 ¶ Than thought she thus now stande I free
 ¶ With snarres & panthers I purpose not my lyue
 ¶ He with no lyme twygges ony more to styue

26.

¶ He is a fooll that scaped is fro daunger
 ¶ That broke his fetters & fled out of pylon
 ¶ Agayne to resoite/biente childe dredeh fyre
 ¶ He may beware by wylde doins and reason
 ¶ Sugar strawed that hydeh false pylon

32
[T]her is no denyng so peryllous of sharpnesse
[A]s whan it hath of tryacle the lykenesse

27. [W]ho dredeth no peryll in peryll he shall falle
[S]mothe waters ben of tyme depe
[T]he quayle pype can moost falsely calle
[U]p the quayle vnder the nette doth crepe
[A] blere eyed fowler truste not though he wepe
[S]eche we his thombe of wepyng take none hede
[T]hat smale byrdes can nype by the hede

[A]nd now that I luche daungere am escaped
[I] wyll beware and a fore prouyde
[T]hat of no fowler I wyll nomore be Japed
[F]ro theyr lyne twygges I wyll flee for a syde
[W]here peryll is peryll is to abyde
[C]ome nere thou choile and herke to my speche
[O]f thre wysedoms that I shall the teche

11
[B]eue not of wysdome to hastely credence
[T]o every tale ne to every tpyng
[B]ut conceyue of reason and of prudence
[A]monge many tales is many a lerynge
[H]astely credence hath caused grete hyndrynge
[R]eporte of tales and tpynges tolde of newe
[H]abeth many a man to beholde vncerwe

30
[F]or one parte take this for my raunson
[T]he seconde grounded on scrypture

Desyre not thou by noo condycyon
Thynge whiche is impossyble to recure
Worldly desyres stande all in auenture
And who desyred to clymbe hyghe a losse
He sodayne tourne falleth ofte vnlosse:

The thyrde is this beware bothe eue & morowe
Forgete it not but lerne this of me
For treasour lost make neuer to grete sorowe
Whiche in no wyle may recouered be
For who soroweth for losse in that degre
Rekene fyrste his losse and after his payne
Of one sorowe he maketh sorowes tweyne

After this lesson the byrde began a songe
Of her escape gretely reioysynge
And remembred her also of the wronge
Done by the choile fyrste at her takynge
Of her affraye & of her enprysonynge
Glad that she was at large & out of drede
Said to hym hoouynge aboute his hede

Thou were sayd she a veray naturall foole
To lustre me departe of thy lowdenes
Thou oughtest of right complayn & make doole
And in thy herte to haue grete heynes
That thou halte losse so passynge grete ryches
Whiche myghte suffyle by valewe in rekenynge
To paye the raunlog of a myghty kynge

34
There is a stone whiche called is a Jagonce
Of olde engendred within myn entrapll
Whiche of fyne golde pepleth ay vnce
Stryne of colour lyke garnettes of encayll
Whiche maketh men vitoryous in batayll
And who so euer bere on hym this stoon
Is full assured agayne his mortall fooy

35
Who hath this stone in his possession
Shall suffre no poverte ne none Indygence
But of all trealour haue plente and foyson
And euery man shall do hym reuerence
And enemye shall do hym none offence
But fro thyv handes now that I am gone
Playne yf thou wylt for thy parte is none

43
It causeth loue it maketh men gracyous
And fauorable in euery mannes lyght
It maketh accomde betwene folke enuyous
Conforteth sorowfull maketh heuy hertes lyght
Lyke topasyn of colour sonneshe bryght
I am a fooll to seile all attones
Do teche a chorde the pryce of precyous stones

44
Men sholde not put a precyous margaryte
As rubyes saphyres and other stones ynde
Emerawdes and other perles whyte
Afore rude swyne that loue drake of kynde
For a lowe delyteth as I fynde

More to draffe her pygges for to glade
Than to all the perry þ cometh out of garnade

15. **E**che thyng draweth to his semblable
Fyllhes to the see beestes on the stronde
The aper for foules by nature is couenable
And to the plough man for to tulle the londe
And to a choile a dongforke to his honde
Ilose my tyme ony more to tarpe
For to telle a choile of the lapydarpe

46. **T**hat thou haddest thou gettest nomore agayn
Thy lyme twygges and panteris I desyre
To late me gone thou were foull ouer seyn
To lose thy ryches only of folpe
I am now free to synge and to flye
Where that me lyst and he is a fool at all
That is at large and maketh hym self charrall

To here of wysdome thyv eres ben half deef
Like an alle that lystneth on an harpe
Thou mayst goo pypro to an yuy leef
Better is to me to synge on thornes sharpe
Than in a cage with a choile to carpe
For it was sayd of folkes yeres agoon
A choiles choile is ofte woo begoon

49. **T**he choile felte his herte parte on cweyne
For veray sorowe and a sonder ryue

Alas sayd he I maye well wepe and pleyne
As a wretche neuer lyke to thyng
But for tendure in pouerte all my lyue
For of folye and of wyfulnes
I haue now lost all holly my ryches

I was a lorde I crye out on fortune
I had grette treclour late in my keepynge
Whiche myght haue made me longe contune
With that stone to haue lyued lyke a kynge
If I had sette it in a rynge
Whom hit vpon me. I had good ynough
I sholde thay nomore haue gone to the plough

Whan the byrde sawe the choile thus moine
And how that he was heuy of his chere
She toke her flyght & gay agayn retorne
Towarde hym and sayd as ye shall here
O dull choile wysedomis for to lere
That I the taught all is left behynde
Racyd awaye & clene out of thy mynde

Taught I not the this wysedom in sentence
To euery tale brought to the of newe
Nor to hastely gyue ther to credence
So to tyme thou knowe that it were trewe
All is not golde that sheweth goldesthe hewe
Nor stones all be nature as I fynde
Be not laphys that shewe colour ynde

53. ¶ In this doctryne I loske my labour
¶ To teche the luche p. ouerbes of substance
¶ How mayst thou see thy bynded errour
¶ For all my bodey poysed in balaunce
¶ Wepech not an vnce rude is thy remembraunce
¶ I to haue more pople closed in myn entraplle
¶ Than all my bodey set for the counceytraylle

54. ¶ All my bodey wepech not an vnce
¶ How mygher than I haue in me a stone
¶ That peylech more than a Jagonce
¶ Thy brayne is dull thy wytte is all moost gone
¶ Of thre wysedoms thou hast forgore one
¶ Thou sholdest not after my sentence
¶ To currey tale to hastely gyue credence

55. ¶ I had also beware both euey and morowe
¶ For thyng. losse of sodayne auenture
¶ Thou sholdest not make to morhe sorowe
¶ Whan thou seest thou mayst it not reare
¶ And here thou faylest whiche doost thy cure
¶ In thy snare to cathe me agayne
¶ Thou art a swoll thy labour is in vayne

56. ¶ In the thyrde thou doost rane
¶ I had thou sholdest in no maner wyle
¶ Foueyte thyng that thou mayst not haue
¶ In whiche thou haste forgone myn enpyle
¶ Than may I laye playnly to deuyse

Thou hast of madnes forgotten all thre
Notable wysedoms that I taught the

The vppretener treateth of holssome trynes
Of genyll sturpe boosteth the gardener
The fyssheth casteth out hokes and lynes
To catche fysh he in euer y freshe ryuer
Of tylthe of londe treateth the bouere
The genyllman talketh of genterye
The chorle delyteth to speke ybaurdye

All one to the fawbone and a hysse
As good an owle as a poppyngaye
A doke of the donghyll as deynre as a snype
Who scructh a chorle hath many a carefull daye
A den syr chorle fare well I flee my waye
I calle my neuer hens forth me lyunge
To fore a chorle ony more to spuge

Ye folke that shall this fable see or rede
Newe forged tales I counseyll you to flee
For losse of good sake neuer grete hede
Be not sorowfull for none aduersyte
Lourepte no thyng that may not recovered be
And remembre where euer ye ryde or goon
A chorles chorle is alwaye woo be goon

Unto purpose this prouerbe is full ryff
Rede and reported by olde remembraunce

A chyldes byrde and a knaues wyff
Haue ofte lythe grette sorowe and melchance
And who hath freedom hath all suffylance
Better is freedom with lytyll ioy gladnes
Than to be thrall with all worldly ryches

Goo lytyll quayer and recōmaunde me
Onto my mayster with humble affectyon
Beseke hym lowly of mercy and ppye
Of thy rude makynge to haue compassyon
And as touchynge thy translatyon
Out of frenche how that it Englyshed be
All thyng is sayd vnder correctyon
With supportacyon of his benygnyte

Explicit the choyle and the byrde. Empryn
ted att Westmynstre in Carsons houle by
Wynkeg de worde.



